

Eric Carpenter: Beating the odds

Despite seemingly impossible odds, the flexibility Aspen University offers enabled Eric Carpenter to achieve his goal of an MBA with specialization in project management and take care of unexpected personal complications.

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Eric Carpenter is the ideal example of how Aspen University helps students reach their academic goals against difficult odds.

Despite a hectic schedule, compounded with an unexpected family crisis, Carpenter graduated from Aspen with his Masters of Business Administration with specialization in Project Management.

Initially, he chose Aspen due to its financial and academic benefits.

"I started with cost," Eric said. "A typical brick-and-mortar school would cost somewhere between \$40,000 and \$60,000. I compared the learning to the best-in-class institution, Harvard. I discovered Aspen uses the same educational material. That was the convincing point."

Before he began classes at Aspen, Carpenter worked for a medical manufacturing corporation in California. He decided he could best help his company by improving his skills in managing its various products. During his classes at Aspen, he began to find areas that were poorly managed with inefficient functionality. More importantly, he learned how to correct those problems.

"It was enlightening to discover how a company becomes so inefficient," he said.

According to Eric, Aspen University stands out among other universities because of its flexibility in terms of students balancing work and home responsibilities.

"Aspen allowed me to function as a working adult while expanding my education," he explained. "Most schools assume a student has no other life than school. And, in

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many cases, that's simply not true. Many of us are working professionals attempting to move into better careers and can't just take years off at a time to complete a graduate degree."

His work schedule was already hectic while working on his MBA. Then he received some devastating news.

"While I was working on my degree, my wife was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer. It required us to find alternative treatments in Arizona." Eric said. "It was more of a challenge than I thought it'd be. I traveled back and forth between California and Arizona for three months."

Despite the emotional upheaval and tremendous stress, Eric continued his studies. He created a schedule that allowed him with his wife and stay on track with his classes.

“If you’re disciplined, you can spend two hours an evening at home in the books, then schedule a day (either Saturday or Sunday) to really dive in and do the detailed homework. It works really well with even the most hectic schedule,” he said.

Eric believes if he was at a brick-and-mortar school, he would have had to take a leave of absence during his wife’s treatment. “Aspen helped me to succeed where any other school couldn’t.”

“Aspen’s classes pertained directly to the degree I was pursuing. Every one of them had some facet of business that I had little experience in. They even took into account a company’s political stance in order to better manage the project. That was very interesting!”

Eric is currently an internal auditor for a technical company in San Diego. He uses tools he learned at Aspen every day to succeed at his job and enjoy it as well. “What I learned at Aspen has helped me wrangle a disturbing process into something more manageable,” Eric said.

After the grueling emotional journey, Eric and his wife learned she had been misdiagnosed. Currently in perfect health, she’s very proud of her husband, an Aspen University graduate.

About Aspen University’s MBA with specialization in project management

The MBA with specialization in project management provides students with the skills essential to operating effectively in corporations and start-ups organized around project-driven teams, as most are today. Because of Aspen's demonstrated commitment to project management and recognized solid professional development infrastructure for the project management profession, we are approved as a Project Management Institute (PMI®) Charter Registered Education Provider. Our MBA with specialization in project management covers all of the knowledge areas in PMI's Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge. Find out more about this, and our other offerings, at www.aspen.edu.